



# RECOVERING FROM **COVID-19**



# A COMPLETE GUIDE

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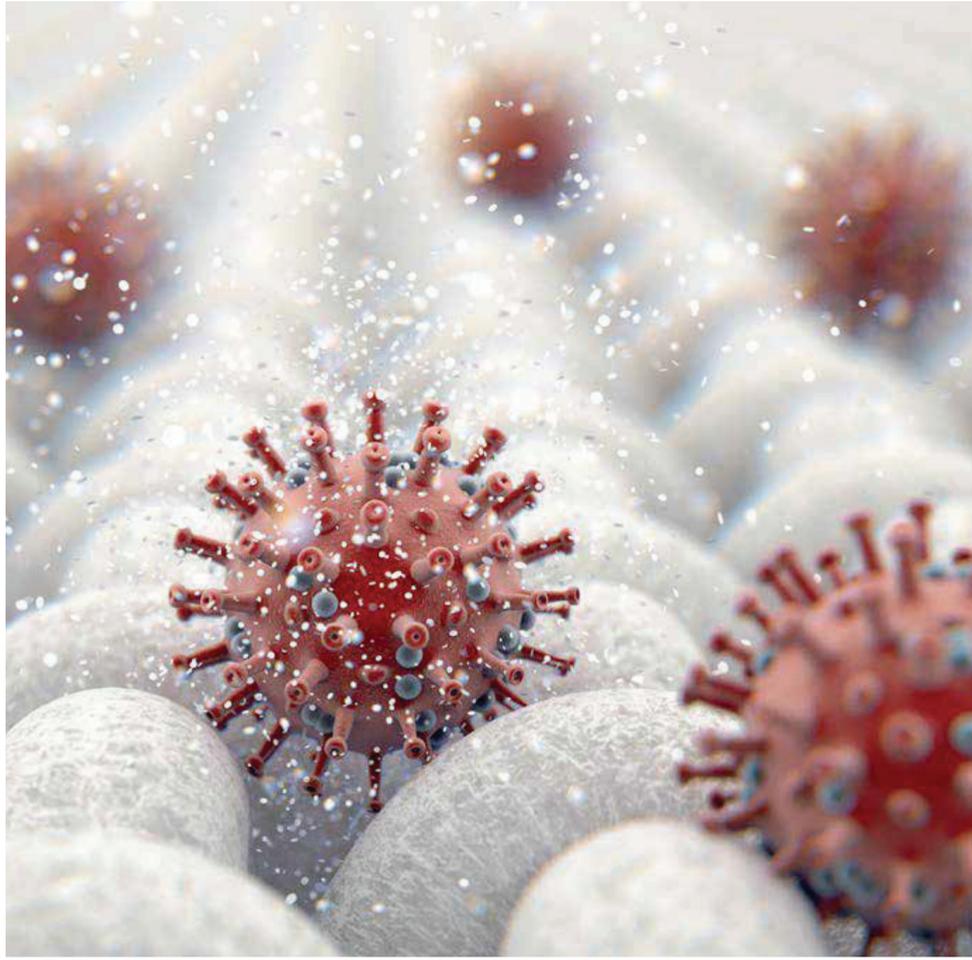
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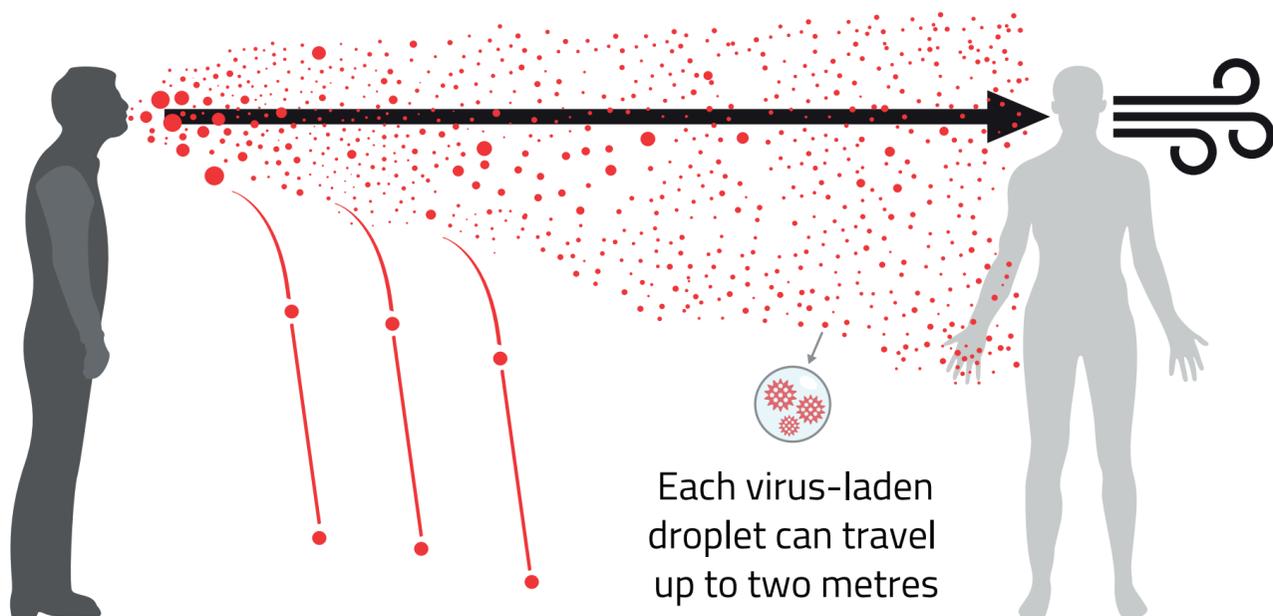
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# HOW COVID-19 SPREADS



COVID-19 spreads primarily through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It enters the body via nose, mouth and eyes



Some recent studies suggest that the virus may be airborne and can be spread through fine infected droplets that remain suspended in the air in closed air-conditioned environments due to absence of cross-ventilation, even when one is not in direct contact with an infected person.

# HOW TO REDUCE TRANSMISSION



**STAY HOME**, especially if you are above 60 years or below 5 years of age, or have comorbidities



**WEAR A MASK** at all times when outdoors



**SOCIAL DISTANCING** - when out of doors, keep a distance of at least 6 ft from others



**WASH YOUR HANDS AND FACE** at regular intervals with soap and water for at least 20 seconds



**CLEAN** frequently-touched surfaces with disinfectant regularly



**AVOID CLOSED CROWDED SPACES** with central air-condition like offices, malls, etc. with inadequate fresh air



**AVOID CONTACT** with sick individuals



**SEEK MEDICAL ADVICE** as soon as symptoms appear

# HOW IT MANIFESTS

CONGESTION OR  
RUNNY NOSE



FEVER OR  
CHILLS



HEADACHE

LOSS  
OF SMELL/  
TASTE/  
APPETITE



FATIGUE

DRY COUGH,  
COLD, SORE  
THROAT



DIARRHEA

SHORTNESS  
OF BREATH OR  
DIFFICULTY  
BREATHING



MUSCLE  
OR BODY  
ACHES

The severity and duration  
of symptoms can vary; for  
most people, usually the  
symptoms last 7-14 days

Some may have no  
symptoms while others  
may require hospitalisation

If you have any of these symptoms, you should consult your physician who may advise RT-PCR testing if indicated. If you test positive and have mild symptoms, you may be advised home treatment. In case of high case-loads or acute symptoms, hospitalisation may be advised

# IF YOU TEST **POSITIVE FOR COVID-19** HOME TREATMENT **DO'S**



- Do not step out. Stay at home all the times
- Practice good hand hygiene. Wash your hands multiple times, especially after handling cash or credit cards or other surfaces that may have the virus
- Cover your cough and sneeze. The best way to cough or sneeze is into your elbow
- Stay in a separate room with the door closed at all times. Use a separate bathroom
- Wipe your phone with disinfectant wipes or 70% isopropyl alcohol
- Wipe all surfaces you come into contact with. Any bleach-containing household product is effective
- Wear a mask if you step out of or someone enters your room
- Wash your hands before you wear your mask. Only touch ear loops while wearing your mask
- Protect your immune system. Consume a balanced diet, stay hydrated, avoid alcohol, get enough sleep and maintain healthy weight
- Monitor your symptoms daily. Keep a finger pulse oximeter to monitor oxygen saturation
- Seek medical advice on preventive medication for your family members or co-habitors

# IF YOU TEST POSITIVE FOR **COVID-19** HOME TREATMENT **DON'T**



- Don't panic. Keep calm
- Don't visit public areas. Don't use public transport
- Don't shake hands or hug. Use an alternative greeting maintaining 6-8 ft distance
- Don't touch your eyes, nose, mouth or face without washing your hands
- Don't share water, utensils, towels or bedding with family members
- Don't visit older relatives or community members. Discourage visitors
- Don't discontinue self-quarantine until instructed

# IF YOU TEST POSITIVE FOR COVID-19

## WHEN TO SEEK EMERGENCY MEDICAL ADVICE\*

Monitor your symptoms regularly. If you experience any one of the following, seek emergency medical care immediately



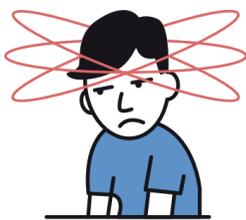
WORSENING  
SHORTNESS OF  
BREATH/ TROUBLE  
BREATHING &  
COUGH



A NEW OR  
RETURNING FEVER  
OR PERSISTENT  
FEVER MORE THAN  
101°F FOR 3 DAYS



PERSISTENT  
PAIN OR  
PRESSURE IN  
THE CHEST



WORSENING  
ABILITY TO  
CONCENTRATE/  
CONFUSION



IF OXYGEN  
SATURATION  
DROPS TO LESS  
THAN 95%



INABILITY TO  
WAKE OR STAY  
AWAKE



BLUISH  
LIPS OR  
FACE

# HOME TREATMENT INSTRUCTIONS FOR **CAREGIVERS**



## MASK

- Should wear a triple layer medical mask appropriately when in the same room with affected individual
- Front portion of mask should not be touched or handled during use
- Change mask immediately if it gets wet or dirty with secretions
- Discard mask after use; perform hand hygiene after disposal

## HAND HYGIENE

- Following contact with an ill person or his immediate environment
- Before and after preparing food, before eating, after using the toilet, and whenever hands look dirty at least for 40 seconds
- Use soap and water for to wash hands. Alcohol-based hand rub can be used, if hands are not visibly soiled
- After washing, use disposable paper towels to dry hands. If not available, use dedicated clean cloth towels

# HOME TREATMENT INSTRUCTIONS FOR **CAREGIVERS**



## EXPOSURE TO PATIENT

- Avoid direct contact with body fluids of the patient, particularly oral or respiratory secretions
- Use disposable gloves while handling the patient  
Perform hand hygiene before and after removing gloves
- Avoid exposure to potentially contaminated items in patient's immediate environment (eg, avoid sharing cigarettes, eating utensils, dishes used towels or bed linen)
- Food must be provided to the patient in his room
- Utensils and dishes used by the patient should be cleaned with soap/detergent and water wearing gloves
- The utensils may be reused

# RECOVERING FROM COVID-19

If you are recovering from COVID 19 or have returned home from the hospital, you will face smaller battles every day until you get back to your routine life

Possible symptoms during and after COVID-19:

- Low energy levels and early fatigue
- Difficulty in breathing, becoming breathless with even a little bit of physical activity
- Chest Congestion & excessive phlegm
- Cough with phlegm
- Loss of appetite & altered taste
- Headaches
- Lack of concentration
- Anxiety and Fear
- Insomnia

Some of the symptoms will get better on their own. Others will require patience and efforts on your part

People with serious complications need ICU care and ventilator support for breathing, which can take a toll on their physical as well as mental health in the longer run. In many cases, they may need breathing assistance even after coming off a ventilator. The patient may need a Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP) ventilator at home for the oxygen support required



# RECOVERING FROM COVID-19 MANAGING YOUR COUGH

## TIPS TO MANAGE **DRY COUGH**

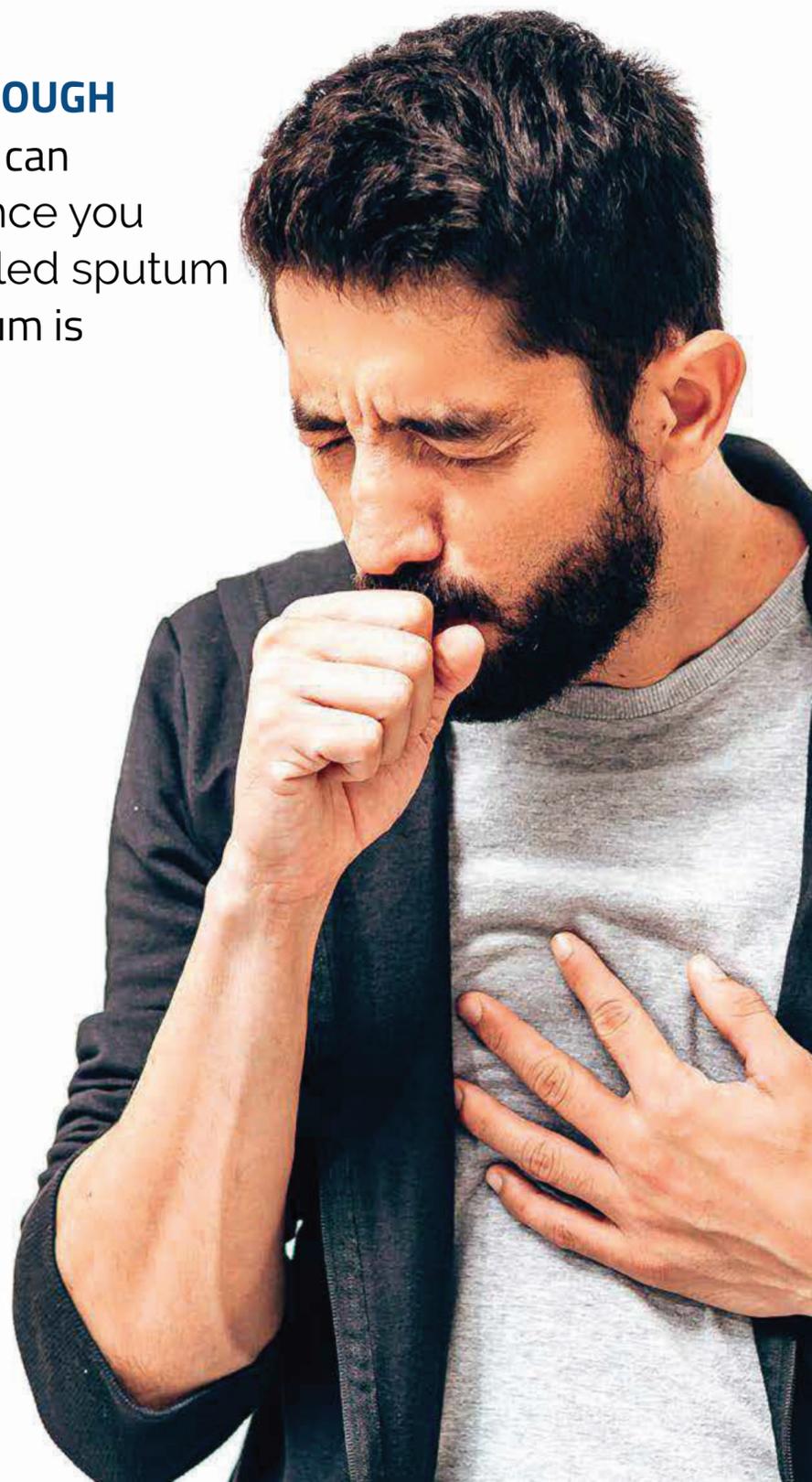
A dry cough is likely to put greater strain on your throat. Here's how to manage a dry cough:

- Stay hydrated with plenty of water (preferably lukewarm)
- Take small sips of fluids to facilitate swallowing
- Warm drinks like honey and lemon or another kadha are soothing to the irritated throat
- Steam inhalation to cure a dry cough
- Salt water or Betadine gargle can be effective for treating a sore throat
- If you feel the need to cough but don't have a soothing drink or water at hand, swallow repeatedly

## TIPS TO MANAGE **PRODUCTIVE COUGH**

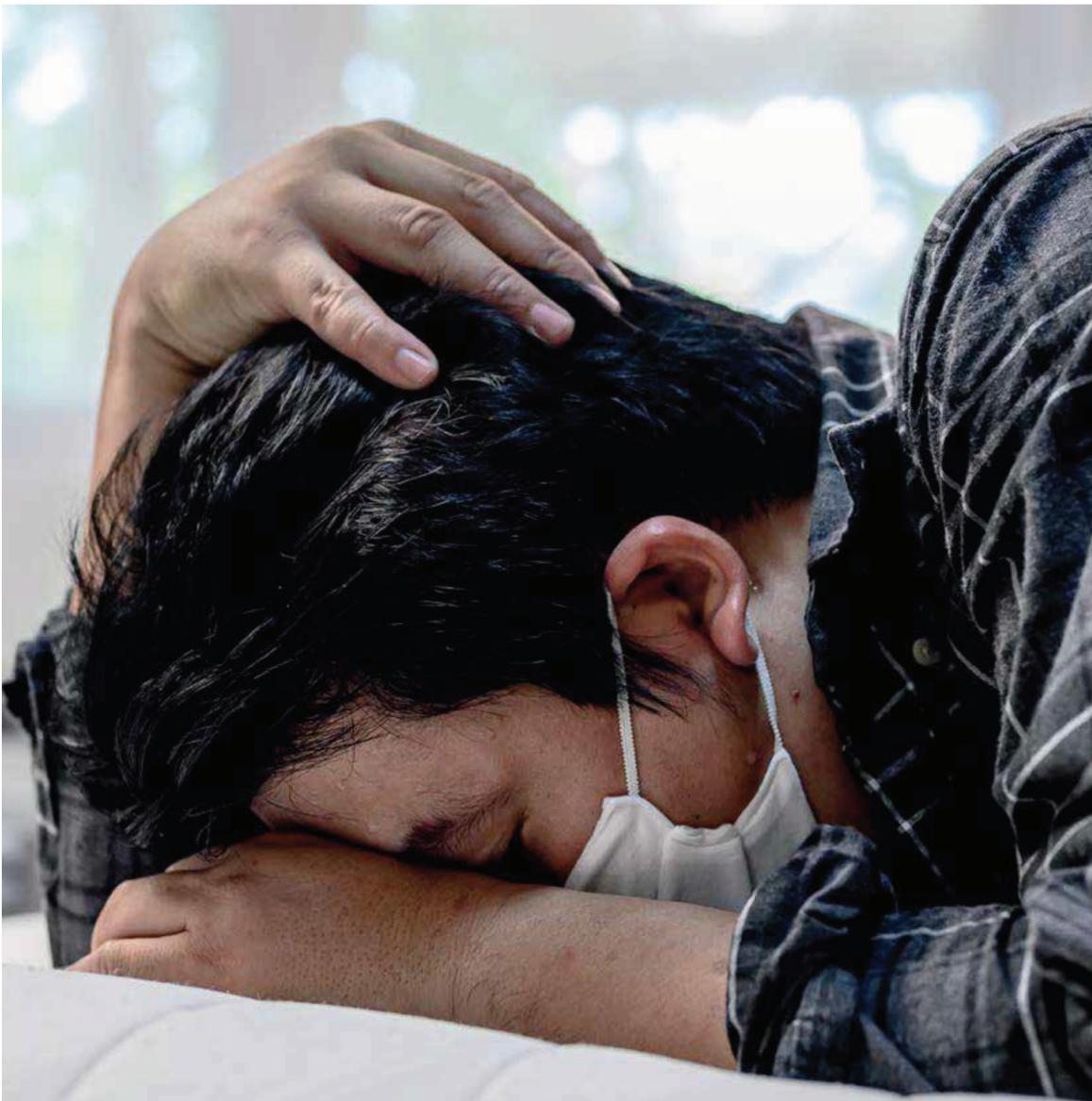
A phlegmatic or productive cough can become difficult to manage since you have to spit out the phlegm-filled sputum regularly. Proper disposal of sputum is very important.

- Keep yourself hydrated
- Steam inhalation at least thrice a day to loosen the phlegm congested in lungs
- Lie on either the left or the right side, instead of on your back. This might help drain the phlegm faster
- Walk around your room as movement increases functioning of the lungs, and can also move the phlegm to facilitate spitting it out



# RECOVERING FROM COVID-19 FATIGUE MANAGEMENT

**Chronic fatigue is classified as fatigue** lasting more than six weeks. The impact of fatigue is more than just lower productivity



Here's how to manage your fatigue

- Planning for demanding (physically, mentally) and repetitive tasks
- Regular staggered breaks during a day allow for both physical and mental restoration as well as social distancing
- Days off during the week
- Plan your day schedule to allow you a better plan for completing your work as well as sleep between work periods

# RECOVERING FROM COVID-19

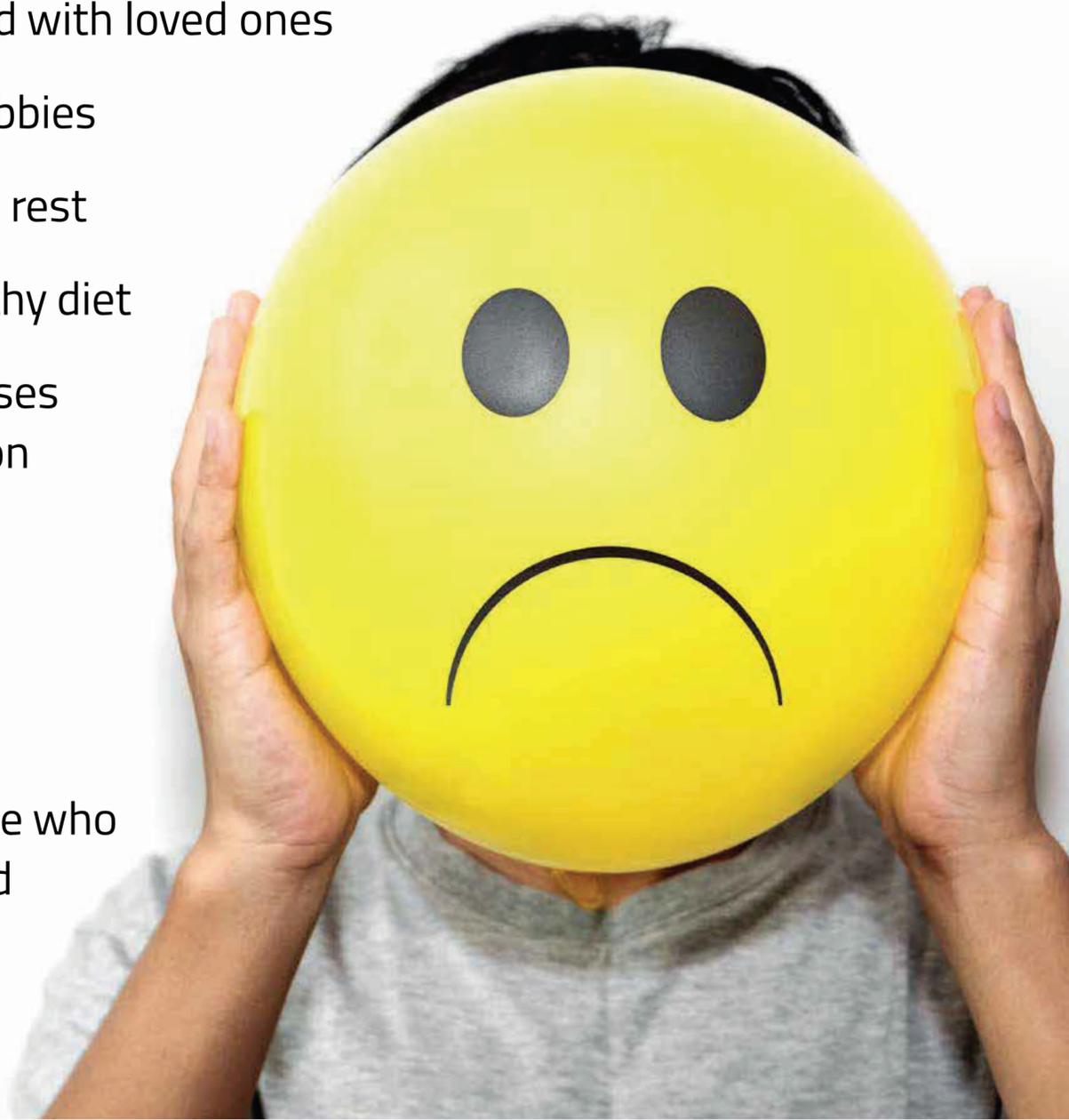
## TAKE CARE OF YOUR EMOTIONAL WELLBEING

The disease may impact your emotional wellbeing too. Some psychological impacts of infection are:

- Fear and worry about your health and the health of your loved ones, your financial situation or job, or loss of support services you rely on
- Fear of social stigma
- Irritability, anger, confusion
- Frustration, loneliness
- Denial, anxiety, depression, insomnia, despair

Here are some things which you can do cope:

- Take a break from constantly watching the news
- Stay connected with loved ones
- Relive your hobbies
- Take adequate rest
- Maintain healthy diet
- Do light exercises if your condition permits
- Do not hide your illness
- Share positive stories of those who have recovered



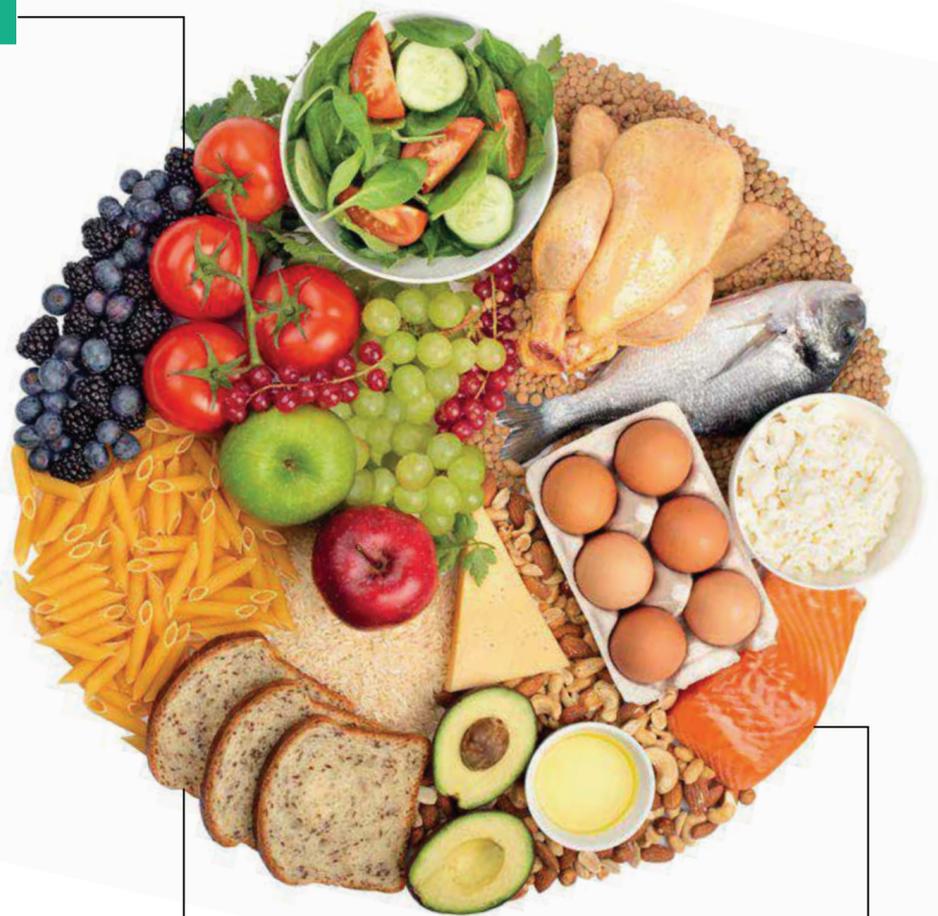
# RECOVERING FROM COVID-19 MAINTAIN A HEALTHY DIET

Good nutrition is very important before, during and after an infection. While no foods or dietary supplements can prevent COVID-19 infection, maintaining a healthy diet is an important part of supporting a strong immune system

## PROTECTIVE FOODS

These are rich in vitamins and minerals that play a significant role in enhancing immunity.

Seasonal fruits and vegetables, rich in vitamins A, E and C, minerals (like zinc, copper, iron, etc) are known to influence immune responses



## ENERGY-RICH FOODS

Cereals (wheat, rice, maize), fats/oils, sugars are a great source of carbohydrates that provide energy to the body

## BODY-BUILDING FOODS

Pulses, animal foods, milk and milk products provide protein to the body

## IMMUNITY BOOSTERS

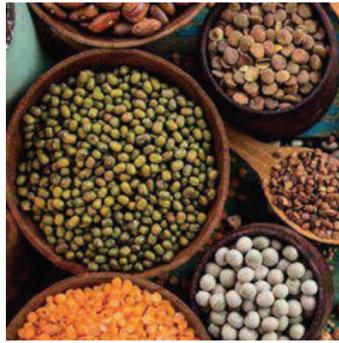
Ayurvedic immunity-promoting measures:

- Herbal tea, or decoction (Kadha), golden milk
- Ginger & Garlic in cooking
- Drinking warm to normal water, keeping hydrated

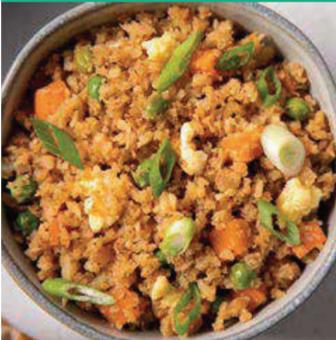


# RECOVERING FROM COVID-19 TIPS TO STAY HEALTHY

Divide your daily calorie intake into 5-6 small meals



Take fiber in diet, like whole grain cereals, grams & pulses, oats etc



Consume at least 4-5 servings of fresh fruits and vegetables daily



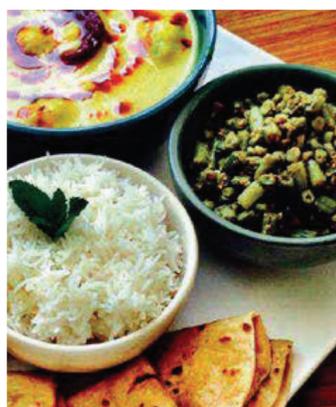
Make antioxidant-rich foods like almonds, walnuts, flax seeds part of your daily diet



Use olive, canola, rice bran, soy or mustard oil for cooking. Change oils every two months



Water intake should be at least 2 litres a day



Eat home-cooked food



Don't skip meals; eat at regular intervals



Limit salt, processed & preserved foods



Restrict alcohol, tobacco, smoking

## POST-COVID

# REGAINING YOUR STRENGTH

Due to damage caused by the virus to lungs and other organs, the body takes time to recover and get back to its former state. Reach out to a therapist for help in adjusting to your new energy levels and limitations

Some things that could help are:

- Take support from your family members and friends
- Take gradual steps towards regaining strength
- Re-organize some things in your life so they require less energy while you recover
- Keep frequently used items in easily accessible places
- Prioritize the activities- do only those which are absolute necessary
- Take plenty of rests in between activities
- Store items at a convenient height so as to avoid excessive stretching
- Breathe easily and properly during the activities
- Don't do strenuous activities which cause lot of physical exertion
- Do breathing exercises regularly



## POST-COVID

# EXERCISE: WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Exercise is an important part of recovery after a severe COVID-19 illness as it can help to:



IMPROVE  
FITNESS



REDUCE  
BREATHLESSNESS



IMPROVE  
ENERGY



INCREASE  
CONFIDENCE



IMPROVE  
THINKING



IMPROVE  
BALANCE &  
COORDINATION



INCREASE  
MUSCLE  
STRENGTH



REDUCE  
STRESS, IMPROVE  
MOOD



## POST-COVID

# EXERCISE: RULES TO FOLLOW

- Always warm-up before exercising, and cool down after exercising
- Wear loose, comfortable clothing, supportive shoes
- Wait at least an hour after a meal before exercising
- Drink plenty of water
- Avoid exercising in very hot weather
- Exercise indoors in very cold weather



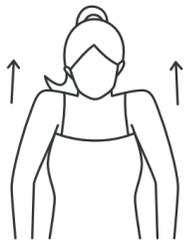
Don't exercise, or stop when you feel...

- Nausea or feeling sick
- Dizziness or light headedness
- Severe shortness of breath
- Increased pain
- Clamminess or sweating
- Chest tightness

## POST-COVID

# TYPE OF EXERCISES

### WARM-UP EXERCISES



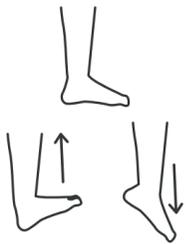
Shoulder shrugs



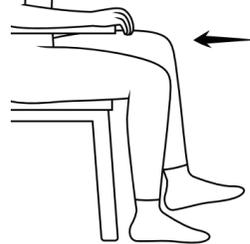
Side bends



Shoulder circles



Ankle taps



Knee lifts



Ankle circles

### FITNESS EXERCISES

- Marching on the spot
- Step-ups
- Walking
- Jogging or cycling

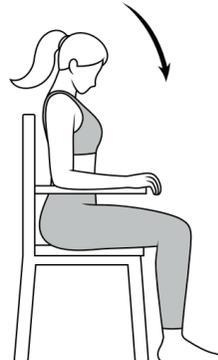
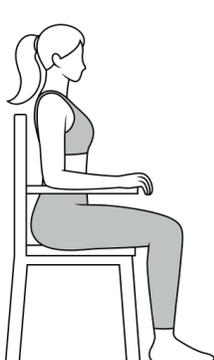
### STRENGTHENING EXERCISES

- Bicep curl
- Wall push-off
- Arm raises to the side
- Sit-to-Stand
- Knee straightening
- Squats

### COOL-DOWN EXERCISES

Cool down exercises should last approximately 5 minutes, breathing should be back to normal by the end.

Walking at a slower pace or gently marching on the spot, for approximately 2 minutes. Repeat the warm-up exercises in sitting or standing positions



## POST-COVID

# TYPE OF EXERCISES

### MUSCLE STRETCHES



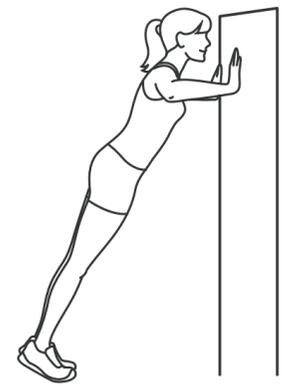
Side stretch



Shoulder stretch



Back of thigh (Hamstring)



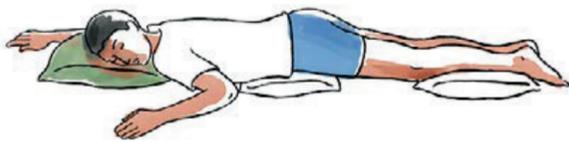
Lower leg (Calf)

### BREATHING EXERCISES

- Diaphragmatic Breathing (Belly Breathing)
- Pranayama- Alternate Nostril Breathing
- Humming
- Self-Awake Proning

#### 1 LYING ON YOUR BELLY

⌚ 30 minutes



#### 2 LYING ON YOUR RIGHT SIDE

⌚ 30 minutes



#### 3 SITTING UP

⌚ 30 minutes



#### 4 LYING ON YOUR LEFT SIDE

⌚ 30 minutes



### CHEST EXERCISES

#### Incentive Spirometry



- Put the mouthpiece in your mouth and close your lips tightly around it
- Inhale slowly and deeply through the mouthpiece to raise the indicator
- Remove the mouthpiece and hold your breath for at least 3 seconds
- Exhale normally

#### Balloon Exercise

Blowing balloons works out the intercostal muscles responsible for spreading & elevating the diaphragm and ribcage

## POST-COVID

# HOW TO EASE BREATHLESSNESS



**High side lying**  
Lie on your side propped up by pillows, supporting your head and neck, with your knees slightly bent



**Forward lean sitting**  
Sit at a table, lean forward with your head and neck resting on a pillow and your arms resting on the table



**Forward lean sitting (no table)**  
Sit on a chair leaning forward, rest your arms on your lap



**Forward lean standing**  
While standing, lean forwards onto a windowsill or other stable surface



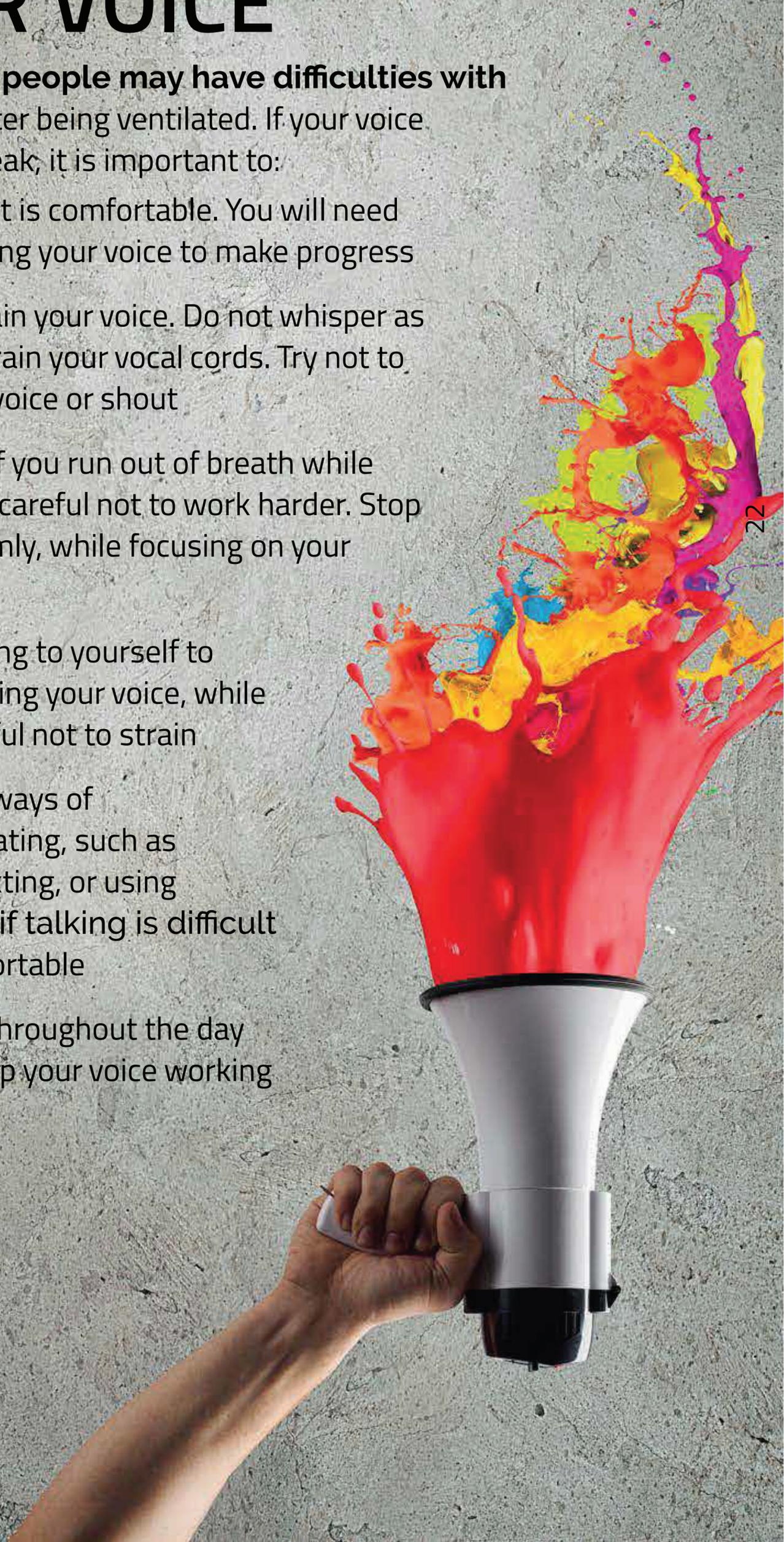
**Standing with back support**  
Lean back against a wall. Keep your feet about a foot away from the wall & slightly apart

## POST-COVID

# MANAGING PROBLEMS WITH YOUR VOICE

Sometimes people may have difficulties with their voice after being ventilated. If your voice is raspy or weak, it is important to:

- Talk when it is comfortable. You will need to keep using your voice to make progress
- Do not strain your voice. Do not whisper as this can strain your vocal cords. Try not to raise your voice or shout
- Take rest. If you run out of breath while talking, be careful not to work harder. Stop and sit calmly, while focusing on your breathing
- Try humming to yourself to practice using your voice, while being careful not to strain
- Use other ways of communicating, such as writing, texting, or using gestures, if talking is difficult or uncomfortable
- Sip water throughout the day to help keep your voice working

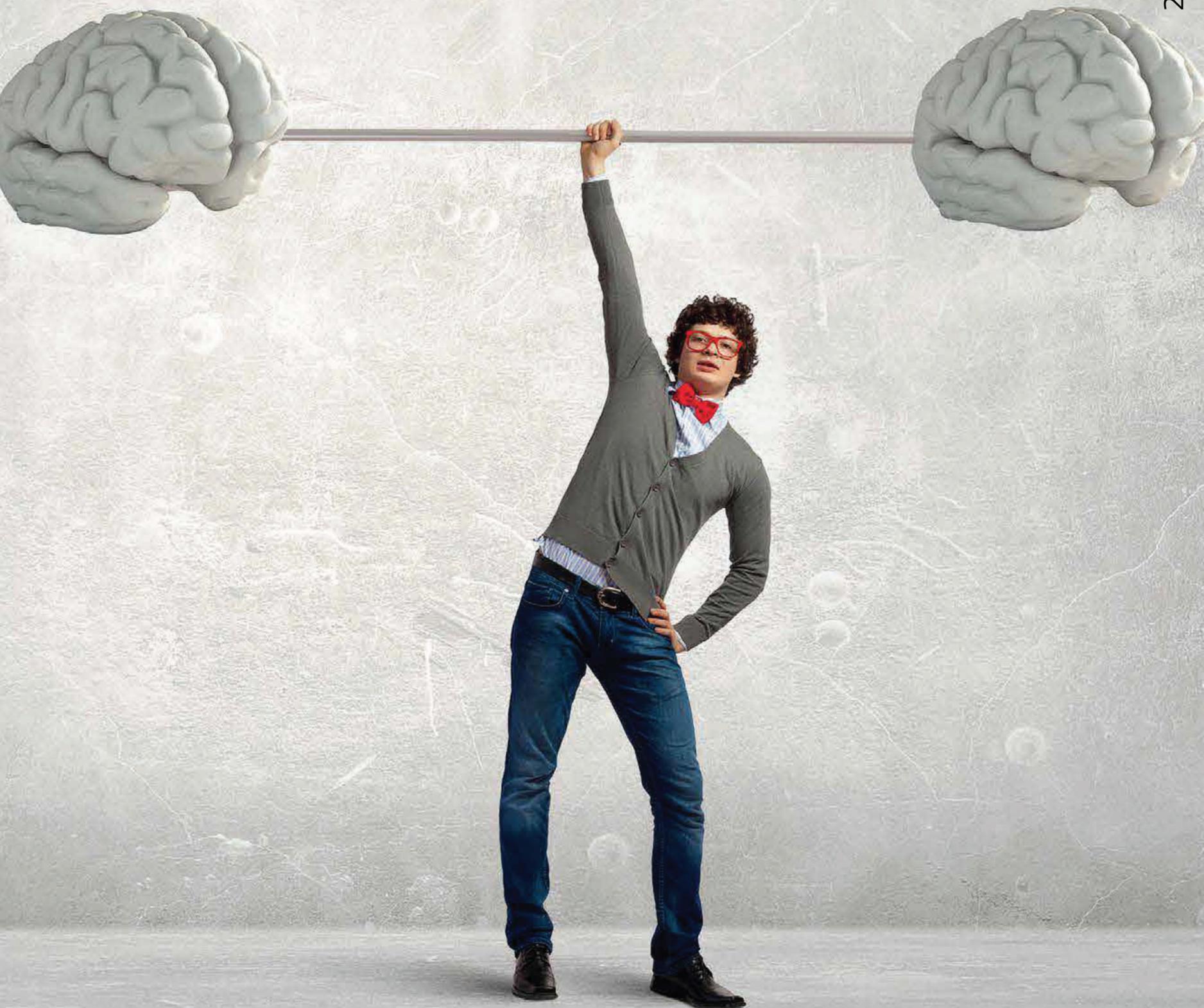


## POST-COVID

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# MANAGING PROBLEMS WITH **ATTENTION, MEMORY, & THINKING CLEARLY**

- Physical exercises to help the brain recover
- Brain exercises — start with exercises that challenge you but are achievable and increase the difficulty as you are able
- Prompt yourself with lists, notes, and alerts, that can remind you of things you need to do
- Break down activities into individual steps to avoid feeling overwhelmed



RECOVERING  
FROM COVID-19  
**A COMPLETE  
GUIDE**



**Aster** **HOSPITALS  
& CLINICS**  
We'll Treat You Well

[www.asterhospital.com](http://www.asterhospital.com) | [www.asterclinic.ae](http://www.asterclinic.ae)

**04 44 00 500**

Sources:

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WHO guidebook for Support for Rehabilitation Self-  
Management after COVID-19- Related Illness  
US- Centre for disease Control (CDC)